

## REMARKS

In the Final Action of September 23, 2003, the Examiner has maintained the rejection of claims 22-25, 27 and 31-43 while finding claims 26, 28-30 and ~~44-47~~ to be of patentable scope, if rewritten into independent form incorporating all limitations of the base and any intervening claims. Responsive to the rejection, Applicants submit herewith a revised set of claims in which the allowable subject matter has been recast into independent form, as follows:

The subject matter of allowable claim 26 has been incorporated into independent claim 22. Claims 23, 24, 25 and 27, directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 22, thus become allowable. Claim 26 has been cancelled.

The allowable subject matter of claim 28 has been combined with independent claim 22 and is now presented as new claim 48. New claims 49 and 50 recite the subject matter of original claims 23 and 24 in connection with the allowable subject matter of 28. Claim 28 has been cancelled. Claim 29, previously dependent on allowable claim 28, has been amended to be dependent on new claims 48, 49 or 50. Similarly, claim 30, previously dependent on claim 28, is now dependent on claims 48, 49 or 50, capturing the multiple dependency of now cancelled claim 28.

Rejected claims 31-37, ultimately dependent on amended, now allowable claim 22, are now similarly allowable.

The subject matter of allowable method claim 44, has been incorporated into independent claim 38. Thus, claims 39-43, dependent upon claim 38, are also allowable. Claim 44 has been cancelled.

The subject matter of objected-to claim 45, previously dependent on claim 44, has its dependency changed to now-allowable claims 38 or 39.

The subject matter of allowable claim 46, previously dependent upon claim 38 or 39, has been combined with the subject matter of claim 38 as new independent claim 51. Claim 52 recites the further limitation of claim 39 in connection with the subject matter of new claim 51. Claim 46 has been cancelled. Similarly, claim 47, previously dependent on claim 46 (now cancelled) has been made dependent on new claims 51 or 52.

Passage to allowance is solicited.


Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: December 15, 2003

  
JAY A. BONDELL